

THOUSAND CANKERS DISEASE UPDATE—SHOULD I SELL WALNUT?

Recently, because of thousand cankers disease (TCD), questions and concerns have come to the Division of Forestry from forest landowners and consultant foresters regarding the sale of black walnut trees.

First, an update on the status of TCD in Indiana is in order.

The Division of Entomology & Plant Pathology and Division of Forestry have conducted TCD surveys since 2011, after the first confirmed detection of TCD in the eastern United States (Knoxville, TN in August 2010).

The annual surveys include two visual surveys for symptomatic trees and a trapping survey for the Walnut Twig Beetle (WTB), the confirmed vector of the TCD fungus, *Geosmithia morbida*.

One visual survey occurs in 10 urban areas/ cities each year. The other visual survey is done by gypsy moth trap-tenders reporting walnut trees (healthy or with dieback) near each trap location.

In 2015, the urban areas/cities survey examined 1,431 walnut trees, and the trap tenders reported 842 walnut trees. Of those, 26 had dieback and none were confirmed with TCD. Since 2011, more than 40 urban areas/ cities totaling more than 3,700 walnut trees, and more than 5,200 walnut trees reported by trap tenders have been surveyed. Less than 2 percent reported dieback. None had TCD.

The WTB survey involves setting traps baited with the WTB lure. A detection survey sets traps at high-risk sites (sawmills, veneer mills, log consolidation yards, green waste sites and along the Ohio border to Butler County, Ohio). A delimit survey is conducted at the sawmill in Franklin County and the walnut plantation at Yellowwood State Forest in Brown County, due to the detection of WTB and *Geosmithia morbida*, respectively, at those locations.

In 2015, 249 traps were placed in the detection and delimit surveys. A total of 2,592 samples were examined from the traps. The only detection of WTB was from traps at the sawmill in Franklin County.

Results of the survey efforts are:

- TCD has NOT been detected and confirmed from a black walnut tree in the state of Indiana.
- There are NO dead or dying black walnut trees in Indiana from TCD.
- There is NO widespread TCD mortality in Indiana, and none is expected in the near future.
- The components of TCD—WTB and *Geosmithia morbida*—have been detected in Indiana, but not together at the same site.
- WTB has been detected in traps but NOT in standing trees.
- *Geosmithia morbida* has been detected from a weevil, *Stenomimus pallidus*, which was collected from a study tree in the Yellowwood State Forest plantation.
- There are NO TCD-infected walnut trees in the Yellowwood State Forest plantation.



Walnut twig beetle magnified.
Steven Valley, Oregon Department of Agriculture,



Also, there are NO reports of widespread walnut mortality from TCD in the infested states of Tennessee, Virginia, North Carolina, Maryland, Pennsylvania and Ohio.

Therefore, if you are approached to sell your black walnut trees now because the “Walnut Disease” (TCD) is coming and you should sell

before it gets to your woods, the response and recommendation is to contact your consulting forester or district forester for advice, follow your current management plan and **do not sell the walnut just because of TCD.**

State Entomologist Phil Marshall does not anticipate rapid and widespread mortality of walnut once TCD is confirmed from an Indiana black walnut tree.

Canker on a walnut twig.

Ned Tisserat, Colorado State University, Bugwood.org.

For more information, visit **<http://www.in.gov/dnr/entomolo/6249.htm>**.

Email Marshall at **pmarshall@dnr.IN.gov**, or write him at Division of Entomology & Plant Pathology, 402 W. Washington St. Rm 290W, Indianapolis, IN 46204, or call him at (317) 232-4189 (Office) or (812) 595-2740 (cell).